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# China's Experiment With Democracy: The First Step on a Long March?

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An Intelligence Assessment

State Dept. review completed

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PA 81-10320C

August 1981

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# China's Experiment With Democracy: The First Step on a Long March?

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## **An Intelligence Assessment**

*Information available as of 2 July 1981  
has been used in the preparation of this report.*

This paper was prepared by [ ] the  
Analytical Methods and External Research Staff of  
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with the National Intelligence Officer for China.  
Comments and queries are welcome and may be  
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**China's Experiment With  
Democracy: The First  
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**Key Judgments**

As part of its efforts to reform social, political, and economic life in China, the Chinese Government has undertaken a major experiment in local democracy over the past two years. This experiment—which involves direct elections of county-level representatives—has the long-term goal of establishing meaningful legislative institutions. It is intended to achieve several related objectives:

- Enhance the popularity of a political system that is seen to have lost the confidence of many.
- Strengthen government institutions.
- Develop a more balanced relationship between the Communist Party and government bodies at various levels.
- Curb abuses of power by party and government officials by providing a suitable vehicle for mass criticism and suggestions.

The ultimate goal is the development of a more stable political system.

The elections have progressed slowly and are only now being completed. They have been beset by the inevitable administrative difficulties in carrying out the first nationwide elections in almost 20 years, by antiregime dissidence, and by the obstruction of local officials attempting to maintain their own positions.

Universities and colleges throughout the country have reacted to the elections with vigorous political campaigning, which has occasionally resulted in the election of dissident anti-Marxist students. Although an irritant to the top party leadership, the reported 60 or so such student delegates do not pose a significant problem for the regime even at the local level. Thus, party leaders are unlikely to remove them from their positions; pressure and manipulation will be used in preference to formal sanctions.

Obstruction of the election process by local officials appears to have been widespread and suggests the depth of opposition likely to be encountered in efforts to make China's legislatures—known as people's congresses—something more than the rubberstamp organizations they have been in the past.

The completion of election work this year will provide the starting point for further measures to enhance the political significance of the elected legislative bodies. The impulse for further democratic reform still exists among the Chinese leadership, which reportedly has discussed substantial restructuring of the National People's Congress and the possibility of

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holding direct elections for the premiership. The people's congresses are now being urged to exercise their newly granted rights to review and criticize government budgets and programs.

Despite current leadership interest, the long-term prospects for democratic reform are highly uncertain. Opposition by local officials is likely to increase in proportion to the impact of those reforms on their functions and status. Further, the Chinese leadership itself is uncertain about how to provide the proper balance between democracy and party control. In these circumstances, the moves to implant an element of democracy in Chinese political life may become subordinated over the longer term to other elements of the ambitious reform program.

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## China's Experiment With Democracy: The First Step on a Long March?

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### The Dilemma of Party Control

The high degree of control by the Chinese Communist Party over political, social, and economic life in China has presented the party leadership with a continuing dilemma since 1949: how to maintain a sufficient degree of control without engendering inefficiency, bureaucratization, and popular disaffection. Decentralization of economic decisionmaking, relaxation of controls over intellectual life, the renewed emphasis on academic excellence in the educational system, and other reforms introduced in recent years under the tutelage of Deng Xiaoping have helped define a more balanced role for the party.

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In the government, this problem is being attacked with a series of reforms intended to enhance the status of government—as opposed to party—institutions. Under the rubric of “socialist democracy,” these reforms have the long-term goal of establishing national and local legislatures that play an effective role in government—with general guidance provided by the Communist Party. Direct elections to county-level legislatures are the first step in this reform.

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The motivations of the Chinese leadership in implementing democratic reforms are several. One strong motivation is the memory of the Cultural Revolution. The Gang of Four was able to rise to prominence in part because of the lack of multiple power centers on the Chinese political scene. Backed by Mao Zedong's authority, Jiang Qing, Mao's wife, and her colleagues were subject to few institutional constraints. By developing and strengthening a variety of political institutions, the Chinese leaders hope to prevent another Cultural Revolution—a period that they regard as synonymous with political instability.

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A second important motivation derives from the leadership's pessimistic assessment of popular attitudes toward the Communist Party. The party's prestige in the aftermath of the Cultural Revolution and the ravages of the Gang of Four is low. Because popular expectations about economic growth are unlikely to be met in the next year or two of retrenchment, they are

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particularly sensitive to the need to develop the popular support that is necessary for long-term economic success.

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The Chinese Communist Party is also attempting to revive some of the revolutionary traditions developed in Yenan during the late 1930s and early 1940s.

These traditions emphasize the need for the party to heed the advice of the people—including criticism of specific individuals and policies. The problem has been to find ways to solicit popular participation in controlling abuses by officials without surrendering the party's central political role. China's legislatures—known as people's congresses—are intended to serve as ombudsmen for citizen grievances. One function of direct elections, even though they are conducted only at the local level, is to provide an external check on officials performance.

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In conjunction with other Dengist reforms, the infusion of a measure of democracy into Chinese political life is intended to enhance government authority. The vision behind these reforms is the creation of a more balanced political process in which sectors of Chinese society other than the Communist Party also play a role. By allowing a greater degree of popular initiative and granting more autonomy to government institutions, the Chinese leadership hopes to create a more stable political system in the future.

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### The Electoral Laws

In July 1979 the National People's Congress (NPC) adopted several amendments to the Chinese constitution that were intended to strengthen “socialist democracy” in China. These amendments mandated that:

- Standing committees be established as permanent representatives of people's congresses at the county level and above.
- Revolutionary committees—a Cultural Revolution creation—be replaced by people's governments.
- Deputies to the county-level people's congresses be elected directly by the voters.

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Legislative bodies at higher levels—the national and provincial people's congresses—continue to be chosen by the lower people's congresses. The intent of these amendments is to introduce a limited degree of popular participation into the political process while at the same time strengthening the role of government institutions. The people's congresses, in particular, were given an expanded role that included appointment of government officials and review of government programs and budgets.

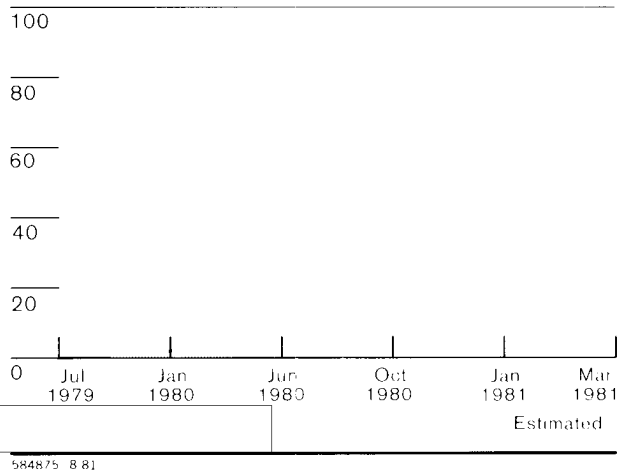
The laws and procedures for electing representatives for county-level people's congresses allow for a degree of popular initiative without sacrificing local-level party control. Any individual can become a candidate if he is nominated by another person and seconded by three others. Local organizations, including the Communist Party, have the right to forward nominees. Since this nomination process can produce a large number of candidates, the law provides that the list of candidates be winnowed down to a final list through a process of repeated consultations and deliberations with local organizations or through primary elections. The exact nature of these consultations is not prescribed, but they result in quotas to ensure that women and significant ethnic minorities are represented and that the proper mix of occupational and political groups is obtained. Primary elections seem to have been infrequently used—principally at colleges and universities—perhaps because of the reluctance of local officials to surrender control of the nomination process.

In a departure from past practice, the election rules stipulate that the final list of candidates should exceed the number of positions available by 50 to 100 percent. This has been hailed in the Chinese media as a great advance in "socialist democracy" as the voters have a real choice. Inasmuch as many candidates compete within a voting unit for several seats, there is the possibility of genuine competition between candidates for voter support. But the limited publicity allowed candidates seems to have made it difficult for voters to make meaningful choices among the different candidates.

The laws stipulate that voting is by secret ballot. In their efforts to maximize voter participation, however, election officials provide substantial opportunity for

### Progress in Completing Elections (China)

Percent of County-Level Units



voters to submit absentee or proxy votes. Election officials have also been known to bring the ballot boxes to individual homes. Where this occurs, the integrity of the secret ballot is obviously suspect.

### Election Progress and Problems

Implementation of election work has proceeded in several distinct stages. In the first stage—the second half of 1979 and the first half of 1980—elections were held in selected test areas throughout the country (figure 1). Very few elections were held during 1979, but 17 percent of the counties and county-level districts within China had conducted elections by June 1980. The experience gained was then applied in the second stage that constituted the major push to complete election work. During this period, from July 1980 to approximately March 1981, an estimated 66 percent of the county-level units conducted elections. The final stage, which is continuing, is devoted to finishing up election work by the end of 1981.

The lengthy period for completion of election work was necessitated in part by the sheer magnitude of the task. Election committees had to be organized in each locality, voters registered, and lengthy lists of candidates reduced in order for elections to occur. Since elections had not been held in China in almost two decades, each of these tasks required a substantial

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propaganda effort to explain the election process and its significance. The lengthy period for conducting experimental election work indicates that the Chinese leadership had a realistic appreciation of the size of the task. [ ]

Yet the reported 60 or so dissident county-level representatives do not pose a serious challenge to the regime. They constitute only a small proportion of the county-level people's congress members, with little opportunity to influence policy at even the local level. The high-level attention given to this problem stems primarily from the perception that the current electoral reform is creating demands among intellectuals for Western-style democracy. The Chinese media have gone to considerable lengths in recent months to persuade intellectuals and others that China is not about to abandon party rule in favor of competitive democracy. [ ]

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The substantial lag in completing elections was also increased by several unforeseen occurrences. Severe weather conditions seem to have had significant effects in certain areas. Flooding in Hubei apparently delayed the beginning of election work there, and the severe drought in Hebei seems to have been responsible for the limited progress of election work in that province. Elections in the autonomous regions—principally Xizang—were delayed considerably by changes in minority nationality policy that were introduced in 1980. Elections were stopped for a while to allow for greater minority representation in the election process. [ ]

Despite the evident irritation of the party's top-level leaders, their practical response has been limited. Local officials are apparently encouraged to limit the number of successful dissident candidates by postponing elections until more favorable times, making special efforts to recruit particularly well-qualified candidates to run against the dissidents, and mobilizing the party's propaganda resources. Dissident candidates are also criticized for anti-Marxist statements. Nonetheless, more heavyhanded measures that threaten the integrity of the election process do not seem to be encouraged, and it is unlikely that successful dissident candidates will be deprived of their positions. [ ]

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But the more than two years required to complete the elections cannot be explained solely in terms of administrative difficulties. Progress in election work has also been hampered by political challenges of two very different sorts. Elections at China's colleges and universities have often been freewheeling affairs in which dissident students have attacked the Communist Party's control—either on campus or national issues. And local officials throughout China have manipulated the election process through a variety of measures—including juggling candidate lists, gerrymandering electoral district boundaries, and falsifying election results. [ ]

Opposition to direct elections by local officials seems to have been a more widespread and serious problem. Violations of electoral laws by local officials have been reported in at least nine of China's 29 provinces, municipalities, and autonomous regions. From available evidence, it is difficult to know how severe these violations have been. Yet in some provinces—for example, Guangdong and Yunnan—the violations were serious enough to delay the progress of the elections. [ ]

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The student dissidence stimulated in part by the electoral campaigns has been highly visible and clearly an affront to the Chinese leadership. Dissident activities in response to the elections were reported at colleges and universities in at least six of China's 29 provinces, municipalities, and autonomous regions; student elections were postponed in at least one other. Events such as the election boycott at Hunan Normal College in the fall of 1980 have attracted high-level attention. Dissidence at Beijing University reportedly provoked Hu Qiaomu, a member of the party secretariat, to proclaim that it was "stupid to have a dictatorship and not use it." [ ]

These violations indicate the high degree of opposition by local officials to efforts to introduce even a limited measure of electoral democracy. This opposition seems particularly surprising in light of statistics on election outcomes in selected areas of China that suggest that, outside of the universities, the elections were well-controlled affairs (table 1). Voter turnout

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Table 1

Percent

Reported Statistics on Election Results <sup>a</sup>

	Anhui	Beijing	Gansu	Guangxi	Heilong- jiang	Jiangsu	Shaanxi	Shandong	Shanghai
Voter turnout	90-97	95-97	96	95-100	95+	97			99.5
Communist Party representation		70			66			66 <sup>b</sup>	
Occupational representation									
Workers		8			8				23
Peasants		31			45		73		
Intellectuals					9				8
Party/government officials					32		15		58
Military		2			1				
Minority representation									
Women		24	19						46
Ethnic		5	12		8				

<sup>a</sup> Some of these figures are based upon partial results.<sup>b</sup> Estimated.

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was generally reported to be in the 95-percent range, about 9 percent higher than in the 1950s. Moreover, there seem to have been few surprises in the election results. About two-thirds of the winning candidates were Communist Party members. Ethnic minorities, peasants, and workers seem to be well represented, although the proportion of women does not reflect the population. On occasion, officials have been defeated in these elections, but that appears to have been the exception rather than the rule.

The combination of predictable administrative delays, unforeseen circumstances, and political conflict meant that progress in election work in different areas of the country was very uneven (figure 2). In general, the earliest regions to complete elections were the municipalities directly under national control—Beijing, Shanghai, and Tianjin—and the more industrialized areas of the northeast (for example, Jilin, Heilongjiang). Progress in election work generally was slower in the provinces and autonomous regions of the interior. This pattern suggests that differences in levels of social and economic development—as well as political factors—were important determinants of election progress.

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## Whither Democratic Reform?

The completion of direct county-level elections this year will provide the starting point for further measures to enhance the political significance of the elected legislative bodies. Currently the local and provincial people's congresses are being encouraged to play a more active role. People's congresses at the provincial, municipality, and autonomous region levels are gingerly attempting to exercise their nominal right to appoint government officials, review government budgets, and approve economic plans.

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The impulse for further democratic reform still exists among China's top leaders. They are reported to be weighing a proposal by Zhang Youyu, Vice President of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, to institute a national bicameral legislature—with an upper house of provincial representatives and a lower house composed of representatives of social groups (for example, workers, peasants, military).

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## Progress in Election Work



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The efforts to enhance the role and status of China's legislative and other government institutions seem less likely than economic or party reforms to fall prey to factional disputes within the Chinese leadership. At one time or another over the past two years, Chinese leaders of generally differing views on reform—including Deng Xiaoping, Zhao Ziyang, Ye Jianying, Hua Guofeng, and Peng Zhen—have endorsed the need for a more democratic political life. [ ]

participation without engendering the excesses that they attribute to Western-style democratic practices or endangering Communist Party control. [ ]

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Despite top leadership interests in democratic reform, the question of reform priorities is likely to be important over the longer term. Given the ambitious set of reforms that the Chinese leadership has embarked upon, it is unlikely that all of the reforms can be pushed over the next few years. Democratic reform may be slighted in favor of more pressing reforms in the economic arena. [ ]

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Nonetheless, the prospects for future democratic reform are highly uncertain. Although local and provincial people's congresses are becoming more active, the role that they play is severely limited. They meet infrequently—generally only once a year—for periods of about a week. The number of delegates is too large to permit effective legislative review even if there were more time. At the provincial level, the number of people's congress representatives ranges from about 500 to more than 1,000—with little permanent staff support. The standing committees of the people's congresses are generally composed of officials with other high-level assignments, making it unlikely that their legislative work is given top priority. Thus, basic reforms in the current system of people's congresses are necessary if these bodies are to be more than rubberstamp organizations. [ ]

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The widespread violations of election laws during the current round of elections mean that steps to enhance the political authority of the legislatures will face strong opposition at the local level. The reforms to date have been politically innocuous in terms of the threat to party control, and they have been endorsed by the central party leadership, but they still have aroused significant resistance at the local level. [ ]

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Chinese leaders and their supporting intellectual establishment are uncertain about the appropriate direction for future reform. The "socialist democracy" reforms along with other liberalization measures—such as the loosening of restrictions in the arts—have created expectations of the future installation of "bourgeois democracy" that the regime is now trying to dampen. The problem—as they see it—is to chart a uniquely Chinese path to "socialist democracy." The goal is to create a set of institutions that allow popular

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**Appendix****Election Progress in China's Provinces,  
Municipalities, and Autonomous Regions****Anhui Province**

The detailed rules and regulations on the conduct of election work in Anhui Province were approved by the standing committee of the provincial people's congress in July 1980 and were being tested in August. At that time an estimated 39 percent of the counties had conducted elections—a level roughly in line with national results. In a report made in March 1981 by Chen Zihua to the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee, however, Anhui was described as one of the provinces where projected election work remained fairly heavy. The provincial standing committee was still monitoring the progress of election work in May. [REDACTED]

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The problems apparently were political rather than administrative. Students at the University of Science and Technology reportedly founded a dissident journal in January 1981 that was critical of Communist Party interference in local elections. The third session of the fifth Anhui provincial people's congress urged greater leadership over direct county-level elections and more inspection work—an indication that manipulation of the election process by local officials was a significant problem. [REDACTED]

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**Beijing Municipality**

Election work in Beijing progressed smoothly, with the exception of dissident campaigning at the local universities. Two of Beijing's 19 county-level units had carried out election work by early August 1980; the last of the elections was held on 15 January 1981. [REDACTED]

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Election campaigns in Beijing were for the most part unexciting. Candidates campaigned on the basis of their contributions to China's modernization, local-level grievances on such issues as housing and inflation, and the need for greater controls of abuses by high-level officials. At Beijing, Qinghua, and Chinese People's Universities, however, student candidates raised fundamental questions about the Chinese political system—for example, the relative priority of democracy versus economic development and the role

of the Communist Party. At least two non-Communist students were elected to local people's congresses. The Communist Party leadership was particularly incensed at dissident activities at Beijing University. [REDACTED]

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**Fujian Province**

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A report on election work was given to the standing committee of the Fujian people's congress in March 1981. By that time, direct elections had been held throughout the province, and all the county-level units but one had elected standing committees and people's governments. [REDACTED]

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**Gansu Province**

Election work in Gansu lagged somewhat behind national norms in the beginning. As of July 1980 election work had been carried out on an experimental basis in an estimated 11 percent of the county-level units in Gansu. The detailed rules and regulations on election work were not reviewed by the standing committee of the provincial people's congress until late September. At this point, intensive election work must have been carried out because it was reported in March that election work had been conducted in approximately 74 percent of the province's counties and districts. Despite this progress, Chen Zihua identified Gansu as one of the provinces in which election work had lagged. [REDACTED]

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**Guangdong Province**

Although Guangdong was not singled out in Chen Zihua's NPC report as one of the provinces in which there were significant problems, election work was plagued by difficulties. As early as May 1980 special committees inspecting election work were calling attention to the fact that in "some places" there was inadequate preparation as well as violations of the election laws. [REDACTED]

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By the end of 1979 elections had been carried out in three of Guangdong's county-level units. Efforts to make substantial progress in the first half of 1980 were less than successful, and by September election work was reported to have been launched in only 64 percent of the counties. [ ]

In some areas leading local officials were defeated in the elections. [ ]

#### Guangxi Autonomous Region

Experimental election work was carried out in Nanning municipality in May 1980. By February 1981 election work seems to have been completed, with most of the county-level units having held people's congresses with no reported problems. [ ]

#### Guizhou Province

In a meeting in July 1980 the Guizhou provincial people's congress heard a report from the election committee. Since that time, no further reports on election work have been issued. [ ]

#### Hebei Province

Planning for election work was significantly delayed probably because of the severe drought that affected Hebei. A planning conference on election work was not held until late September 1980. Hebei was identified in the report made in March 1981 to the NPC as one of the provinces where significant election work remained. As of May elections had been completed in only an estimated 31 percent of the county-level units. At that time inadequacies in election work and election violations were reported. [ ]

#### Heilongjiang Province

Heilongjiang was a "model" province in the implementation of election work. By the end of May 1980 election work had been completed in the 17 designated pilot units, with no reported election violations. The standing committee of the provincial people's congress approved trial rules and regulations for

election work in early July. County-level elections in the province were completed in October, well in advance of the planned yearend completion date. [ ]

#### Henan Province

Henan was identified in Chen Zihua's report to the NPC as one of the provinces in which significant election work remained. The standing committee of the provincial people's congress heard a report on county-level elections in that month. There is no indication of the reasons for the lack of progress. [ ]

#### Hubei Province

Flooding probably slowed the early progress of election work in Hubei. In late September 1980 the provincial people's congress standing committee heard reports on election work. At that time election work had been launched in one-third of the county-level units, below the national rate. Election work in Hubei after September must have been substantial, as it was not singled out for its lack of progress in March 1981. [ ]

No elections, however, had been held at Hubei's institutes of higher education as of January 1981.

This situation presumably reflected concern by provincial officials about potential student dissidence. [ ]

#### Hunan Province

The standing committee of the Hunan people's congress heard an election report in early August 1980 and directed that the elections should be completed during the second half of the year. Election activity was apparently heavy during the fall and winter. The provincial election commission was dissolved by the standing committee of the provincial people's congress in early April 1981 as the elections were largely completed. [ ]

Elections at Hunan Normal College in Changsha, however, were the focus of intense controversy in October 1980. A dissident, non-Marxist student candidate was removed from the electoral list, provoking student demonstrations and a boycott of the election. The authorities allowed the situation to settle down and held new elections in March 1981. [ ]

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**Jiangsu Province**

Serious problems in election work were announced at a conference in late September 1980. Insufficient attention to election work and violations of election laws meant that elections had been completed in only 13 percent of the counties and districts. Despite the fact that by the end of January 1981 elections had been conducted in 69 percent of the county-level units, Jiangsu was identified in Chen Zihua's assessment for the NPC as a province in which significant work remained. By May election work had been conducted in all the county-level units, but was not expected to be fully completed until after July. The standing committee of the provincial people's congress was still reviewing election work in late June. [ ]

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**Jiangxi Province**

Jiangxi apparently did not make a major effort in election work until January 1981. There is no evidence of significant progress but Jiangxi was not singled out in Chen Zihua's report to the NPC as a deficient province. [ ]

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As elsewhere in China, student election campaigns provoked controversy. At Jiangxi Normal College, a student who expressed a preference for democracy over socialism and attacked Chinese intervention in Vietnam was one of the final candidates for a county-level seat. [ ]

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**Jilin Province**

The provincial electoral committee was formed in June 1980. Violations of electoral laws were reported in September for "some units." These violations included limiting the number of candidates for seats to a number fewer than specified by law and insufficient consultations with the masses on the selection of the final candidates. These violations were presumably rectified, as county-level elections were completed by the end of May 1981. [ ]

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**Liaoning Province**

The detailed rules and regulations on electoral work were approved by the standing committee of the provincial people's congress in July 1980. Although electoral law violations were reported in at least one county, elections had been carried out in 90 percent of the county-level units by the end of August. [ ]

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Local officials stated that finding young technocrats to run in the elections had been difficult and that older cadre resented the effort to recruit younger cadre. [ ]

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**Nei Monggol Autonomous Region**

Nei Monggol was one of several autonomous regions that were identified in March 1981 as lagging in the implementation of election work. In the fall of 1980 various election violations were reported. These violations by local officials included failure to give adequate publicity to elections, failure to ensure that there were more candidates than seats, and willful disregard of election results. By January 1981 an estimated 80 percent of the county-level units had completed their elections. [ ]

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**Ningxia Autonomous Region**

Election work got off to a slow start in Ningxia. Pilot elections were not begun until September 1980. Although the report made in March 1981 to the NPC did not single out the region as one in which significant work remained, the regional standing committee was still monitoring election progress in early May. [ ]

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**Qinghai Province**

No public reports on progress in election work were made in 1980. This presumably reflected a lack of progress in elections, as the standing committee of the provincial people's congress was still monitoring election progress in late May 1981. [ ]

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**Shaanxi Province**

Elections were being held in Shaanxi in the fall of 1980 with some election violations occurring. Embassy reporting indicated that less than 5 percent of the counties had completed their elections at that time. Election work must have continued at a slow pace, since the provincial standing committee heard a report on election work in June 1981. [ ]

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**Shandong Province**

Election work in Shandong began early, with the standing committee of the provincial people's congress approving electoral rules and regulations in May 1980 on the basis of previous testing in 21 county-level units. One-fourth of the counties and districts had

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completed their election work by October, and the rest were projected to be completed by the end of the year. According to statistics compiled in May 1981, direct elections had been completed in all but one of Shandong's county-level units. [ ]

#### Shanghai Municipality

Shanghai Municipality seems to have been one of the first areas of the country to complete its elections. Except for a few byelections, county and district elections were completed by the end of June. Fudan University in Shanghai was reportedly the focus of considerable dissident activity, with students campaigning on anti-Marxist platforms. [ ]

Only experimental election work in three county-level units had been carried out by December. The regional standing committee was still reviewing the progress of elections in April 1981, and a concern for preventing election law violations was expressed at that time. Not until late June did the regional standing committee discuss and approve regulations for the conduct of elections. [ ]

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#### Shanxi Province

Chen Zihua in his report to the NPC identified Shanxi as one of the provinces in which election work had lagged. By March 1981 elections had been completed in only 39 percent of the county-level units. [ ]

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#### Sichuan Province

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Students at Sichuan University were reported to have boycotted the election on campus because of party interference. As of March-April 1981, the provincial people's congress and the standing committee were still hearing reports on the conduct of the elections. [ ]

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#### Tianjin Municipality

Like the Beijing and Shanghai Municipalities, election work in Tianjin progressed very rapidly. Elections were completed by May 1980, making Tianjin the first area in the country to complete elections. [ ]

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#### Xinjiang Autonomous Region

Preparations for election work were under way in April 1980, but implementation was halted in June. [ ]

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#### Yunnan Province

In March 1981 Chen Zihua identified Yunnan as one of the areas in which substantial election work remained. [ ] elections were not being run fairly and had been stopped as of February 1981. Election dishonesty had aroused popular dissatisfaction. [ ]

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#### Zhejiang Province

The standing committee of the provincial people's congress heard a report on election work in June. During the first half of the year elections had been conducted in about 13 percent of the counties and districts. As of April 1981 elections had been completed in more than 80 percent of the county-level units - roughly in line with national norms. Officials were urged at a provincial people's congress meeting in May to strengthen their leadership over election work in order to bring it to completion. [ ]

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